

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 H-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 ORM-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 /039 W

----- 092494

R 071335Z APR 76

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7864

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, CASC (LESCH, ANN)

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF QUAKER REPRESENTATIVE

REF: JERUSALEM 225

1. SUMMARY. AFTER INITIAL DIFFICULTIES, GOI HAS EXTENDED UNTIL END OF AUGUST PERMISSION OF QUAKER INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE, ANN LESCH, TO REMAIN IN JERUSALEM AND IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER APPLICATION FOR FURTHER EXTENSION AT THAT TIME. ACTION TAKEN WITHOUT NEED OF EMBASSY INTERVENTION. END SUMMARY.

2. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, MR. LOU SCHNEIDER, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF AMERICANS FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE (AFSC), DURING RECENT VISIT TO AREA TOOK UP WITH GOI STATUS OF ANN LESCH, AFSC INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE IN ISRAEL WHOSE "WITHDRAWAL" HAD BEEN INFORMALLY REQUESTED. IN CALL ON CONSUL GENERAL MARCH 26, SCHNEIDER REPORTED THAT LESCH'S VISA HAD BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL MAY 18, 1976, BUT WITH A NOTATION THAT NO FURTHER EXTENSION WOULD BE GRANTED, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH MOSHE YEGAR, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION DIVISION, AND MOSHE RAVIV OF NORTH AMERICAN DESK, MFA, SCHNEIDER HAD BEEN TOLD THAT LESCH ACCUSED OF HAVING ENGAGED "IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES BORDERING ON INCITEMENT." THESE MFA OFFICIALS WERE "UNABLE OR UNWILLING" TO BE EXPLICIT,
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SCHNEIDER SAID, AND ALSO HAD GENERAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT AFSC

"HOSTILE" ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL AND ITS ALLEGED BIAS ON ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. HE WAS GIVEN TO BELIEVE, MOREOVER, THAT INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE'S FUNCTION WAS IN QUESTION, REGARDLESS OF INDIVIDUAL, AND THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT ANY REPLACEMENT FOR LESCH WOULD BE APPROVED. GOI POSITION APPEARED TO BE THAT AFSC SHOULD LIMIT ITSELF TO HUMANITARIAN AND ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES. HE RECEIVED IMPRESSION LESCH MATTER CLOSED AND FURTHER DISCUSSION WOULD SERVE NO PURPOSE.

3. SCHNIEDER, AT CONGEN SUGGESTION, ALSO DISCUSSED PROBLEM WITH EMBASSY TEL AVIV. AFSC AGREED EMBASSY SHOULD AWAIT RESULTS OF FURTHER AFSC EFFORTS BEFORE RAISING MATTER ITSELF WITH MFA. AFSC HAD ALSO ENLISTED SUPPORT OF BERNARD RESNIKOFF, DIRECTOR OF LOCAL OFFICE OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE, AND LOCAL ATTORNEY, ARNOLD SPAER. PROBABLY LARGELY AS RESULT THEIR EFFORTS, SCHNEIDER WAS ASKED TO CALL ON AVRAHAM KIDRON, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL, MARCH 31 AND TOLD THAT LESCH VISA EXTENDED TO END OF AUGUST, WHEN SHE WOULD COMPLETE TWO YEARS IN ISRAEL. MOREOVER, FURTHER EXTENSION FOR ADDITIONAL YEAR WOULD BE CONSIDERED AT THAT TIME.

4. KIDRON TOLD SCHNEIDER THAT LESCH COULD CONTINUE PERFORMING SAME FUNCTION AS BEFORE AND WAS FREE TO TALK TO WHOMEVER SHE WISHED AS LONG AS SHE SAW A WHOLE RANGE OF CONTACTS (WHICH HAS BEEN HER PRACTICE IN PAST). APPARENTLY THE POSSIBILITY OF BARRING A REPLACEMENT FOR LESCH, SHOULD SHE DEPART IN AUGUST, IS NO LONGER CONTEMPLATED.

5. COMMENT. WE AND EMBASSY HAVE FOUND SAMPLES OF LESCH'S REPORTING BALANCED AND NOT CLASSIFIABLE AS ANTI-ISRAELI. WE SUSPECT DISTORTED VERSION OF HER ACTIVITIES WHICH HAD NOT BEEN CHECKED OUT THOROUGHLY, PLUS SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH OFFICIAL AFSC POSITION ON ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM, LED TO ORIGINAL REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL. INTERVENTION OF TWO INFLUENTIAL AND HIGHLY RESPECTED ISRAELIS APPEARS TO HAVE RESULTED IN CLOSER (AND PERHAPS HIGHER-LEVEL) ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO CASE WITH WHAT APPEARS NOW AT LEAST TO HAVE BEEN QUITE SATISFACTORY OUTCOME.

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